

Postcards from Iraq

What has Iraq been like for me?

By U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Tim Lovato, Transportation Office Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, Gulf Region Division, USACE

I arrived in Baghdad a year ago to arrange ground and air transportation for passengers and to be honest, the last 12 months have been a blur.

It is not the first year I have spent away from my wife and kids. There was Operation Enduring Freedom in Germany in 2005-2006 and a one- year tour in Korea starting in 1997. But of the three, this was by far the best.

I think I learned a lot about people of all backgrounds, both good and bad. I believe that the work that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is doing will help build a stronger, better, Iraq. I hope what I brought to the table helped my unit and the people of Iraq. I think it was a productive year. I learned about foreign culture and history. I truly believe I received an education while deployed with the Corps' Gulf Region Division.

I hope the others that served alongside of me realize how good we had it. A CHU (Containerized Housing Unit) may be a large metal box, but it is a lot better than a tent and I rarely ran out of hot water.



Frequent gym workouts helped burn off 40 pounds.

Photos by F. T. Eyre



Ready to get you from here to there.

"Hey Toto, were not in Kansas anymore."

I will remember smoking cigars with the guys around the fire pit, dust storms that would make you change three colors of brown, and scorching temperatures that would make a Mississippi summer seem tepid.

I guess that is enough rambling... It's almost time to pack the bags and head on home to 412th Engineer Command.

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